

MINIMALISM

this very talented student
put in my mailbox his directed studies project:
a book of poems.

as soon as i had time,
i picked it up for perusal.
i was shocked at the incompetence of the first poem.
it was nothing but a row of phrases
that seemed to make no sense at all:

the meat market
visions of susan
dementia praecox strikes el segundo
morning of an abalone
hexameter/parameter
etc.

jesus christ, i thought, i'm going to have to get in
touch with b. and advise him that he's letting conden-
sation prevail over meaning altogether.
he's leaving no transitional signposts whatsoever.
i can't find anything resembling a rhythm
in this pseudo-surreal jumble.

it was only on turning the page,
that i became aware i had been reading the table of
contents.

YELLOW INCISOR

His teeth were yellow.
They were yellow because he never brushed them.
He never brushed them
because he couldn't afford a toothbrush.
He couldn't afford a toothbrush
because he was a dog.

The End.

P.S. While I am not altogether ashamed
of having written the above poem,
possibly because I lack the capacity for shame,
I would prefer to have written White Fang.

-- Gerald Locklin

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